

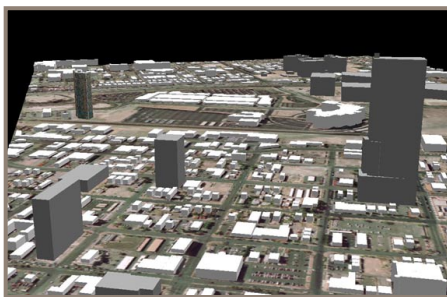


# Las Vegas GROWTH WATCH

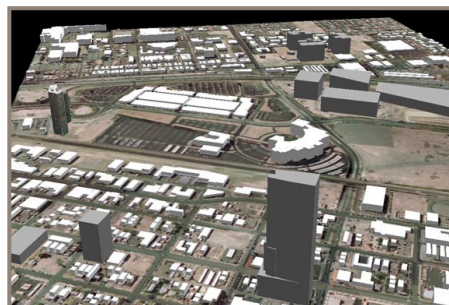
BUILDING LAS VEGAS INTO A WORLD-CLASS CITY

## Downtown Mixed-Use Projects

Since the beginning of this year, some substantial changes have occurred in the direction of downtown residential development. With the continued rise in home prices and land costs, more focus has fallen on vertical building and the use of existing inner city land. Since January of 2004, thousands of new residential units have been proposed, with some having already worked their way through the planning process.



View showing existing and proposed buildings. DSC building is in the middle foreground.



Existing outlet mall and final Furniture Mart build-out shown, along with various condo tower buildings.

Many of the newly proposed projects have incorporated various styles of design, along with combinations of condominium, timeshare and apartment uses. Ground floor retail is also to be seen in most of the proposed buildings. Vertical height is substantially more than in previous projects; some have reached as high as 900+ feet. Topics of interest include parking needs, infrastructure requirements, auxiliary services for the many potential new residents, and affordability. Some of these issues will be dealt with during the planning phase; still others require responses that may be many years down the road.

Vehicle parking for many of the projects is being addressed in vari-

ous ways. One loft project is looking at the use of a hydraulic lift system, which would eliminate the need for a traditional parking garage, as well as make better utilization of the site limitations. Still other projects are using more traditional parking structures and finding it a challenge to maintain adequate numbers of spaces in relationship to parking needs. The Summit development currently proposes 960 residential units and includes mixed-use retail. The total number of parking spaces proposed for the site is 1,170, which translates to an average of 1.2 spaces per residential unit. While this is less than the standard elsewhere in the city, the

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### Fall 2004

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Existing downtown building mass, with proposed condo towers in gray.



Sahara and Las Vegas intersection, showing existing Stratosphere site, along with proposed condo towers.

availability of alternate transportation modes such as the CAT system and monorail, provides mitigation.

To date, concentration of these developments has been roughly in two areas, adjacent to the Las Vegas Blvd. and Sahara intersection, as well as the Charleston Blvd./Las Vegas Blvd. area. Other projects have located in and around the downtown area, as well as the Desert Inn/Rancho corridor. Clearly, access to and view of the Strip area has dominated suitability for the location of many of the proposed proj-

ects. Many of the buildings also have balconies and/or observation decks with Strip and mountain views being the primary focus. Three building proposals even include rooftop swimming pools and/or tennis courts, one of which would be elevated more than 700 feet in the air.

Recent computer software acquired by Planning staff has allowed some of the newly proposed projects to be modeled and viewed in 3-D. The software allows staff to create a shape of the proposed building and place

it on the site location. Additionally, surrounding existing buildings can be modeled, allowing for staff to view how the proposed building could fit with its surroundings. Aerial photography is draped over the 3-D-rendered land to provide a more accurate look to the site. This ability can be used to illustrate to both staff and citizens the look and feel of the proposed building and its orientation on site. Various rendered building images are included with this article to demonstrate the ability of the software.

Conditions are ripe for these types of housing in the valley. Indeed, some service estimates put the potential demand for downtown or strip-adjacent high-rise housing units at more than 20,000 units in the next three years. If this comes to pass, the skyline of downtown Las Vegas could look radically different in the future. Mayor Goodman's vision of "Manhattanizing" downtown Las Vegas could very well become a reality.

## LONG-RANGE PLANNING

# NORTHWEST OPEN SPACE PLAN

Community Open Houses were held in May and July to inform the public of the Northwest Open Space planning process and to provide an opportunity for feedback. Approximately 40 people attended the two open houses in May, representing a wide variety of user groups. Feedback was provided on the need for types and locations of facilities for runners, cyclists, equestrians, as well as programmable activities such as soccer and softball.

In July, the consultant team of Greenways, Inc. introduced the beginnings of a framework of hubs and spokes, focusing on park locations connected by a trail system. Residents were asked to comment on that plan and provide additional input as to more specific uses and locations. These open houses were also well attended and the consultant team was able to gather more useful information.



Northwest Open Space participants met at the Development Services Center.



Northwest Open Space participants held meetings at local community centers as well.

A draft plan addressing this input was presented to the Citizen's Advisory Committee and Technical Work Group at their August meetings and then to the public at the next round of open houses held October 18 and 19.

Information on each of these meetings, as well as maps and the draft plan when it's available, can be found on the Northwest Open Space Plan web site, [www.lasvegasopenspace.com](http://www.lasvegasopenspace.com).

[www.lasvegasnevada.gov](http://www.lasvegasnevada.gov)



# PLANNING DEPARTMENT TO REVISE SITE INSPECTION PROCESS



*Residential areas have standards with specific requirements to create pleasant, walkable environments.*

The Planning and Development Department is implementing a revised on-site inspection program for new development. Currently, the department inspects commercial development prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy; however, the department now incorporates new commercial and residential site inspections for all new development within the city.

Prior to July 2004, the inspection process did not include any on-site inspections of single-family residential development by the Planning Department. Most single-family residential developments are required to



*Trails commonly use specific plant and landscape materials per the type of intended trail use.*



*Some trails also include walls to distinguish them from the sidewalk area, as well as landscaping.*

install landscaping, perimeter block walls and trails. The revised inspection system will require site inspections for all required improvements for all single-family residential construction.

The existing inspection process for commercial and industrial development occurs after the site has been constructed. There was no contact between the developer and staff after the building plans had been reviewed and approved and until the final inspection was requested by the developer. Often, the timing of the required inspection was too late to eliminate any problems that may be identified during the inspection. This timing of the final inspection caused a serious delay to the developer if the developer had not met the conditions of approval imposed by the Planning Commission or City Council.

The Planning Department has begun using additional staff to inspect footing locations for residential and commercial perimeter walls, required landscape planters and trails prior to and after installation of required plant material, and commercial buildings for suite addressing assignments prior to occupancy.

The revised inspection process will bring department staff and the developer together at the beginning of a new project rather than at the end of a new project. The revised process will enable staff to communicate the conditions of approval directly with the builder on the site where it is being constructed.

The inspection process will continue throughout the construction process for both residential and commercial developments. The Planning Department has an inspector in the field every day of the week under the revised inspection process.



*Commercial areas have standards with specific requirements to create pleasant, walkable environments.*



*Streetscapes are subject to conditions in both commercial and residential areas.*



*Design standards applied to commercial landscaping to shield utility boxes from immediate view.*

## REDEVELOPMENT

# CULTURAL CORRIDOR

The city of Las Vegas's Cultural Corridor is now the focus of an interdepartmental team headed by Deputy City Manager Betsy Fretwell. Located north of the I-95 Oran Gragson Freeway and east of I-15, this area is the birthplace of the city of Las Vegas and home to many of the city's historical, cultural and sporting venues.

Since the adoption of the Downtown North Plan on May 21, 2003, the city has been successful in receiving funding for several projects, with more anticipated.

**Cultural Corridor Trails:** The Secretary of the Interior has approved an application for \$2,000,000 from the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA). The project will establish multi-use trail connections between the Las Vegas downtown area and Cultural Corridor. The project includes property acquisition, design plans and construction.



Neon Boneyard

**Neon Boneyard Park:** The Secretary of the Interior has approved an application for \$4,500,000 from SNPLMA. The project will include a public park that will display neon signs from historic buildings and

structures. This project includes property acquisition for permanent display space and restoration facilities for the signage, as well as a neighborhood park.



Cultural Corridor Trail (along Las Vegas Blvd.)

**Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT)/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Transportation Enhancement Program:** \$2,500,000 will be available for Clark County for enhancement grants for streetscape improvements on North Las Vegas Blvd. to create a pedestrian environment that is safe and enjoyable. The project will also provide opportunities for outside seating, as well as provide a direct pedestrian connection to the Fremont Street Experience and other locations downtown.



Lied Children's Museum

**Scenic Byways Cultural Corridor Management Plan (CMP):** In November 2001, the city obtained State Scenic Byway designation for Las Vegas Boulevard from Sahara Avenue to Washington Avenue, making the city eligible to apply for a \$25,000 grant to develop the CMP, which was awarded in 2003. The next step is to apply for National Scenic Byway designation, which is

tentatively set for early 2005. If this is approved, the city will be able to apply for yearly grants for plan implementation including: streetscape and median improvements (including landscape); upgraded parking facilities; lighting and drainage; signage for the byway; and marketing. This round, the city intends to apply for \$200,000 to \$250,000 in the first qualifying round. Twenty-six million dollars were available in the 2003-2004 cycle. In addition, a portion of the Scenic Byways corridor is located within the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) boundaries, allowing the city to apply for CDBG funds.



Grant Sawyer Building

**Question 1 Conservation and Resource Protection Grant Program:** The city will pursue funds through the state to acquire properties near the Neon Boneyard Park for expansion and other properties for urban parks. Projects will include passive recreation space and enhanced landscaping. Five million dollars are available to state agencies, counties, municipalities or qualifying private nonprofit organizations for acquisition of land and water for urban parks and greenbelts, with the next round of applications due in November 2004. "Urban Park" is identified as any natural area; area of scenic value; physical or biological importance or wildlife area and land that provide outdoor community space and connections to other spaces. Urban parks can be any size and shall be open to the public and provide passive recreational opportunities with an emphasis on the natural setting.

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## CITY OF LAS VEGAS PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GARNERS AWARD FOR 3-D URBAN SIMULATION PROJECT

The city of Las Vegas Planning and Development Department recently earned recognition for its unique '3-D GIS Urban Simulation' project. The project, spearheaded by Las Vegas Planning and Development staff member Jorge Morteo, garnered a second place award in the Most

Unique Category during the recent Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) Conference in San Diego, California.

"This very prestigious award is the first GIS International award presented to the city of Las Vegas and places the city's Planning and Development GIS Team as one of the best in the world," said Bob Genzer, director of the Planning and Development Department.

Through urban simulation, city planners can create a virtual world with the ability to walk, drive, fly and experience the environment as it exists today and how it might be in the future. City planners and decision makers can also experience the physical impacts of urban design guidelines or land use scenarios.

The 3-D simulation project was recently used in several city projects. Planners used the program to assist in determining how the height of a proposed downtown senior complex would affect neighbors and whether it would cast shadows over their homes in the afternoons. The 3D model was able to show that the building would



Jorge Morteo stands with his display at the ESRI Conference in San Diego (the National Geographic display was directly to his right) where the Planning Department's GIS team rubbed elbows with many top-notch contenders.

neither block the residents' views nor impede light due to the architectural features displayed by the 3-D model.

Planners also used the program when designing the award-winning Lewis Avenue Corridor project in downtown. The model accurately predicted how Lewis Avenue would look once the project was completed.

The program was also used to determine the best location for a new cooling system in the historic downtown post office, and was used to show the potential placement of banners throughout the downtown area under a proposed program for the city's 2005 Centennial.

## LAS VEGAS DEVELOPMENT REPORT



The city of Las Vegas continues to grow at a very rapid pace. In order to track this growth, Planning Department staff developed the Las Vegas Development Report. This quarterly publication tracks the development of the city in four areas: land sales, planned projects, permitted projects and completed projects.

The Land Sales section outlines the land sales by number, acreage and

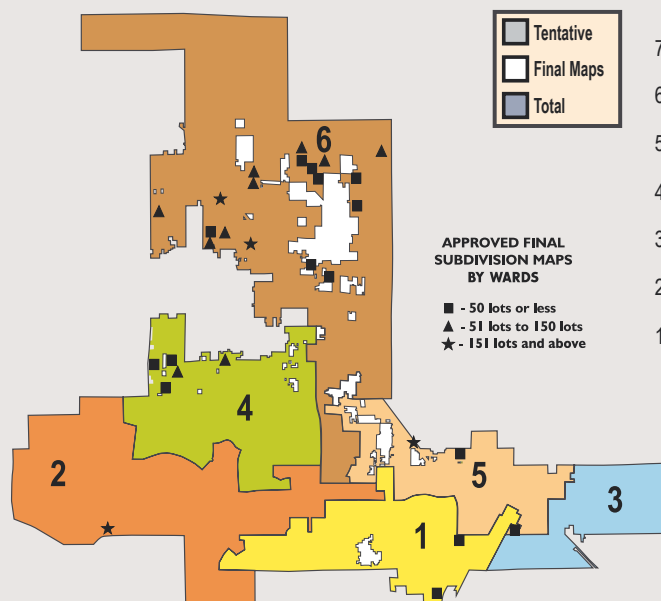
value. The report shows that the bulk of recent land sales have been on the outer rim of the valley, with the city of Las Vegas seeing especially high activity in Wards 4 and 6, north of Cheyenne Avenue.

The Planned Projects section illustrates the site plan development activity in each ward by type of development (commercial, mixed-use, public, single-family, and multi-family). Ward 6 once again continues to see the most activity, though the margin is considerably smaller in this phase of the planning process than in land sales.

The Permitted Projects section looks at the development, by ward, in terms of more precisely defined clas-

sifications. Permitted project data is more robust, allowing staff to provide more detailed analysis by ward for this phase of development. This data includes multiple maps displaying the location of various types of permitted projects and separate charts outlining the distribution of permitted projects by number and value in each ward.

The completed projects section of the report shows the number and location of each completed project, by category. In addition, the percentage of development for each category that takes place in each ward is displayed. This data shows that while Ward 6 is currently home to the vast majority of completed single-family projects, many other types of development are spread more evenly throughout the city.

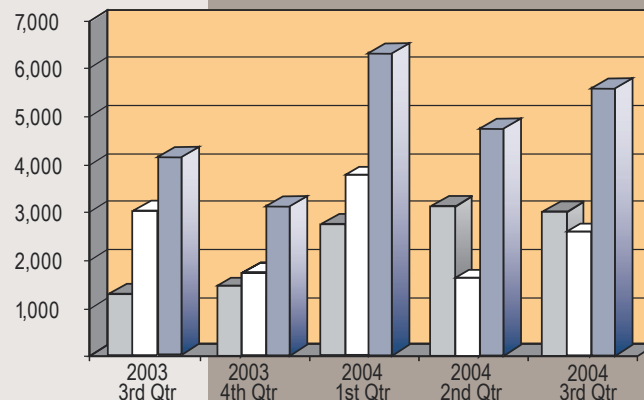


### Leading Economic Indicators For Clark County

"The Southern Nevada Index of Leading Economic Indicators for September declined. Only four of the 10 series posted increased. The construction series were off, if only slightly. Tourism indicators were mixed. Visitor volume increased and gaming revenue declined. The one-month decline in the Southern Nevada Index of Leading Economic Indicators compares favorably to the U.S. Index of Leading Indicators, which has experienced a three-month decline. Both the southern Nevada and U.S. indices, however, continue to trend upward."

Source: UNLV Center for Business and Economic Research

### Approved Subdivision Lots



Source: city of Las Vegas

### Approved Subdivision Lots

	Tentative Maps	Final Maps	Total
3rd Qtr -2003	1,143	2,823	3,966
4th Qtr -2003	1,379	1,574	2,953
1st Qtr -2004	2,558	3,645	6,203
2nd Qtr -2004	2,952	1,521	4,473
3rd Qtr -2004	2,892	2,341	5,233
% Chg Last Qtr.	-2.0	53.9	17.0
% Chg Last Year	153.0	-17.1	31.9

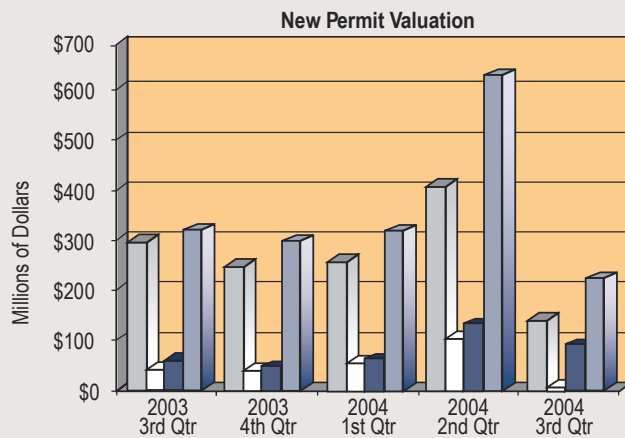
### Leading Economic Indicators

CLARK COUNTY SERIES	DATE	UNITS	LATEST PERIOD	CHANGE PREVIOUS PERIOD	CHANGE YEAR AGO	CONTRIBUTION TO INDEX**
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING						
Units Permitted	Jul-04	# Permitted	3,020	-18.99%	-20.88%	-0.003%
Valuation	Jul-04	Dollars	\$328,091,473	-13.59%	-9.30%	-0.012%
COMMERCIAL BUILDING						
Permits	Jul-04	# Permitted	108	25.58%	0.93%	-0.010%
Valuation	Jul-04	Dollars	\$64,552,777	4.32%	49.22%	-0.047%
TAXABLE SALES	Jul-04	Dollars	\$2,510,615,750	-3.62%	16.50%	0.103%
McCARRAN AIRPORT	Jul-04	Passengers	3,699,442	5.04%	13.93%	0.100%
GALLONS OF GASOLINE	Jul-04	Thousands of Gallons	64,232,916	6.97%	4.80%	0.066%
GROSS GAMING						
Revenue	Jul-04	Dollars	\$647,232,950	-8.11%	-1.32%	-0.387%
CONVENTIONS						
Visitors	Jul-04	People	3,204,588	6.56%	2.63%	0.073%
Attendance	Jul-04	People	266,984	-12.59%	0.85%	-0.007%
OVERALL CHANGE *	Sep-04		129.21	-0.12%	1.41%	-0.12%

\* The index is a six month forecast (October 2004) from the month of the data (April 2004) and four months from the month of the series (June 2004).

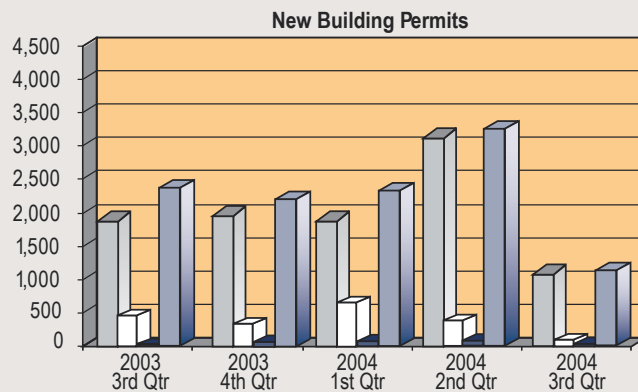
\*\* The contribution to the Index is a net-weighted average of each series after adjustment for seasonal variation.

Source: UNLV Center for Business and Economic Research

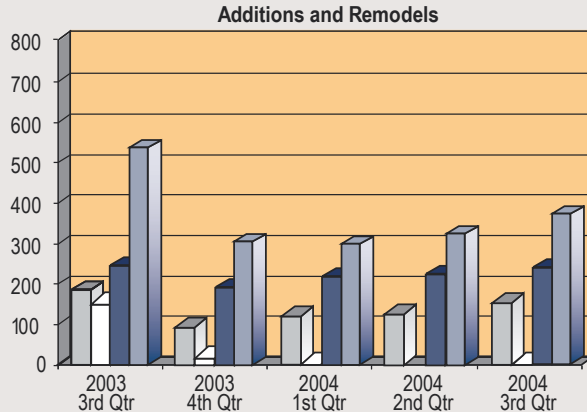


New Permit Valuation				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr - 2003	\$252,425,655	\$27,542,123	\$42,001,671	\$321,969,449
4th Qtr - 2003	\$226,284,644	\$26,163,503	\$36,834,155	\$289,282,302
1st Qtr - 2004	\$236,567,086	\$38,637,924	\$54,744,509	\$329,949,519
2nd Qtr - 2004	\$394,595,953	\$101,228,182	\$131,697,937	\$627,522,072
3rd Qtr - 2004	\$131,451,218	\$6,030,318	\$76,061,730	\$213,543,266
% Chg Last Qtr.	-66.7	-94.0	-42.2	-66.0
% Chg Last Year	-47.0	-78.1	81.1	-33.7

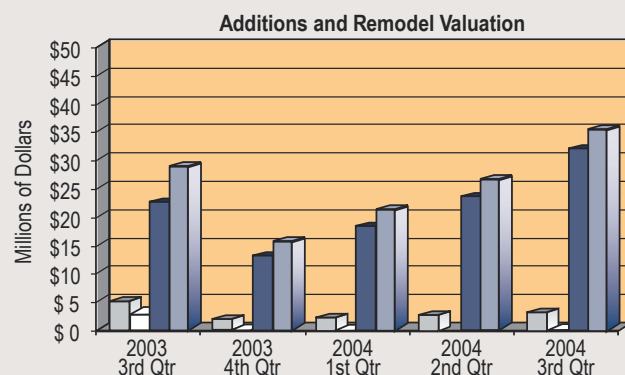
Source: city of Las Vegas (including subdivision information)



New Building Permits				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr - 2003	1,864	394	37	2,295
4th Qtr - 2003	1,799	293	53	2,145
1st Qtr - 2004	1,704	514	52	2,270
2nd Qtr - 2004	2,914	211	55	3,180
3rd Qtr - 2004	865	83	64	1,012
% Chg Last Qtr.	-70.3	-60.7	16.4	-68.2
% Chg Last Year	-53.6	-78.9	73.0	-55.9



Additions and Remodels				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr - 2003	174	134	228	536
4th Qtr - 2003	90	23	195	308
1st Qtr - 2004	97	4	202	303
2nd Qtr - 2004	106	-	206	312
3rd Qtr - 2004	137	3	228	368
% Chg Last Qtr.	29.2	-	10.7	17.9
% Chg Last Year	-21.3	-97.8	0.0	-31.3



Additions and Remodel Valuation				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr - 2003	\$4,285,043	\$2,075,271	\$21,584,589	\$27,944,903
4th Qtr - 2003	\$1,685,229	\$183,500	\$13,981,395	\$15,850,124
1st Qtr - 2004	\$1,812,896	\$51,200	\$18,556,114	\$20,420,210
2nd Qtr - 2004	\$2,117,765	\$ -	\$23,528,417	\$25,646,182
3rd Qtr - 2004	\$2,353,151	\$63,000	\$31,956,974	\$34,373,125
% Chg Last Qtr.	11.1	-	35.8	34.0
% Chg Last Year	-45.1	-97.0	48.1	23.0

## PLANNING PROFILE

# NORTHWEST OPEN SPACE PLAN PROFILES

**R**ecord population growth, coupled with a strong desire among residents and elected leaders to preserve the quality of life and natural features that give the northwest region its unique character, have led to the development of the Northwest Open Space Plan. The city of Las Vegas and the project consultant team have developed this plan in cooperation with a citizen's Open Space Advisory Committee. Following is a profile of the project consultants.

**Charles A. Flink**, FASLA, is founder/president of Greenways Incorporated,



an environmental planning and landscape architecture company established in 1986 and based in Durham, North Carolina. Flink is widely regarded as one of the nation's leading greenway

planners, having completed comprehensive greenway and open space plans for more than 100 communities within 31 states and in Argentina, Canada and Japan.

**Robert M. Searns**, AICP, specializes in trails, greenways, bike paths and open space projects. He was project director of Denver's Platte River Greenway and developed the national award-winning Mary Carter



Greenway in Littleton, Colorado. Searns has a 30-year proven track record in project planning and development and has worked with communities to implement and to manage their projects.

**Jack W. Zunino**, ASLA, is president of J.W. Zunino and Associates in Las Vegas, with more than 20 years of experience in the fields of landscape architecture and land planning. He has been responsible for the planning and designs of many landscape projects, with specific responsibilities ranging from development through construction phase and supervision of all support staff. Zunino's experience also includes recreational area, community master plans, hotels/casinos, demonstration gardens, park planning, recreational planning, public works, streetscapes and golf course design.



**Ron Vine** is co-founder and president of Leisure Vision. He has more than 25 years of market research and consulting experience, including 15 years as a project manager in a wide range of parks, recreation, sports, fitness, health and general governmental projects. Vine has extensive experience formulating and creating public involvement processes leading to consensus solutions, facilitated more than 200 stakeholder interview focus groups and public forums, been involved in successful public/private partnership projects, and conducted surveys resulting in more than \$600 million in funded projects.



Greenway in Littleton, Colorado. Searns has a 30-year proven track record in project planning and development and has worked with communities to implement and to manage their projects.



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Councilman Michael Mack, Ward 6  
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